

College Athlete NIL Litigation, Case No. 4:20-cv-03919

To The Honorable Claudia Wilken,

My name is Mick Brown and I'm a current junior double majoring in Applied Math and Statistics and Finance at the University of Notre Dame. I'm also a part of the Army ROTC program and plan to commission as a second lieutenant upon graduation.

All throughout high school, I planned to serve, both for a greater purpose and to finance my education. Coupled with being a top wrestler in my state, I thought my path was clear, wrestle at the prestigious United States Military Academy at West Point. A grueling process, I dedicated the better part of three years to accomplishing this, culminating in an acceptance letter and tears shed by my family. However, while on the floor of the barracks on my visit, I received another blessing when my mom texted me saying I was accepted in Notre Dame.

Laying on that cold floor, I thought back to my childhood, and how I lived and breathed Notre Dame for as long as I could remember. I thought back on memorizing every word to the iconic film "Rudy", touching the Play Like a Champion Today sign every time I went downstairs, admiring both my parents tattoos of Notre Dame even though neither one attended, and of course back to dreaming of running out of the tunnel in front of 80,795 loyal. I knew then I had a calling to not only attend Notre Dame, but to walk on to the famed football team.

I was elated, the first step towards my lifelong dream was complete. The only problem: I had to give up a once in a lifetime opportunity just for an astronomically low chance. But that's exactly what I did. Even though my parents didn't talk to me for months, and I contemplated if I had ruined my life, I pushed on and trained for the tryout. I trained day and night and felt ready going into the spring tryout. I felt as if everything in my life had led me to this moment, but when I got the news that I didn't make it I was broke. I stood at the edge of a highway and debated if my life was even worth living. I debated transferring, focusing on the Army, or dropping out altogether.

Slowly, though, I pulled myself together and thankfully made the team a year later. The year that followed was the best of my life. I made lifelong friends and brothers, obtained access to resources I didn't even know existed, jumped levels at the game I love, and made countless memories that will truly never be forgotten or taken for granted.

I understand how blessed I am to be in my current position, and I also understand the many dynamics involved in this case. But I also believe uprooting countless kids' lives all across the country would be inhumane. Not because it would be making them just students, but because it would kill that dream that so many had for as long as they can remember. If this goes through, the integrity of college athletics that millions have come to love will be gone. If this goes through, it goes against everything I believe this country stands for, and quite frankly is not something I signed up to serve my country for. On behalf of thousands across the country, please do everything possible to stop this.

Very respectfully,
Mick Brown (NCAA #2402217236)